



## ISSRNC 2009 Conference Excursions

Please find below the information about two excursions that are offered to conference participants on Thursday July 23<sup>rd</sup> and Sunday July 26<sup>th</sup> (note: these excursions are not included in the conference fee).

The Dutch have a long tradition in adapting their environment to secure their living conditions. 'God created the world, the Dutch created Holland', as the saying goes. Since the Middle Ages, water has been converted into land under the famous 'polder' system driven by steadily improving draining technology. 'Progress' has thus long carried the connotation of 'conquering' arable land on 'wastelands' as wild nature areas were called. However, the last century saw a reversal of opinions. As natural areas diminished under expanding population and economic pressure, their ecological values were increasingly realized and defended by the upcoming nature conservation movement. Aside from protecting the remaining natural areas and forests under governmental and European regulations, efforts were made to create 'new' nature in formerly 'developed' places. Even polders have been restored to wetlands, although some farmers firmly resisted. Other farmers go along with the tide and integrate nature values in agricultural practice. As space in Holland is scarce, the challenge is to combine diverging interests of many stakeholders, including industry, housing, recreation, and nature. Solutions are often found by deploying creative thinking and innovative technology, referred to in terms such as 'nature development' and even 'nature building'. In other words, a reversal of the meaning of 'progress'. These concepts will be illustrated by the two conference excursions, as follows:

### **Excursion 1 "Cityside Oasis and Ecoduct"**

Date: Thursday 23 July

Time: 09.00h till 15:00h

Costs: € 35,-

Please note that adequate rainwear and field shoes are required

#### Description

Two objects will be visited East of Amsterdam:

1. The Eemlandhoeve ([www.eemlandhoeve.nl](http://www.eemlandhoeve.nl)), a farm for multifunctional agriculture near the city of Amersfoort. Under the inspired leadership of farmer-cum-philosopher Jan Huijgen ([www.janhuijgen.nl](http://www.janhuijgen.nl)), this farm harbours many new initiatives for integrating nature with human living, such as organic farming, active stewardship of nature elements, an organic products shop, nature education, a care farm, group hosting facilities, and a co-op for city-countryside interaction (see:

[www.versatilecountryside.eu](http://www.versatilecountryside.eu)). The visit will include an organic lunch and a guided tour to the premises.

2. Crailo Ecoduct near Hilversum. This 'eco-bridge' - probably the world's longest eco-bridge - connects two hitherto separated nature areas across a motorway, a

railway, an industrial area and a sports park. It thus allows the crossing and mixing of wild animal and plant populations including rare species such as the Crested Newt and the Pine Marten. It is part of a plan to connect all the country's protected areas within the so-called Netherlands Ecological Network. The bridge was built at a cost of over 14 million Euro and was opened by H.M. Queen Beatrix in 2006.

### **Excursion 2 “Creating the polder and visit a nature developing project in the dunes”**

Date: Sunday 26 July

Time: 14.00 till 19:00h

Costs: € 37,50

Please note that:

- a packed lunch will be provided
- good bicycle skills are required
- adequate rainwear and field shoes are required

#### Description

This excursion departs straight after the conference closure and takes us westward for a bicycle trip and guided tour to the coastal dunes of Schoorl and De Kerf ('The Carve'). This is a man-made sea inlet through the dunes near Schoorl, to allow more freedom to the ecological processes of wind, sand and water. Since the start of this project in 1997, a brackish wetland has developed harbouring various rare and protected plants. The lessons from this successful early 'nature development' project are now applied in other places. The tour will be guided by the Institute for Nature Education (IVN). <http://www.de-kerf.nl/>